

Message Text

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S E C R E T STATE 223117

EXDIS DISTRIBUTE AS NODIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT NICOSIA 2671 ACTION SECSTATE 06 SEP 76

QUOTE S E C R E T NICOSIA 2671

NODIS

FROM HOUGHTON AND MACK

E. O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR LE
SUBJECT: MEETING WITH GEMAYEL

REF: STATE 215513

1. PIERRE GEMAYAL RECEIVED ME AT HIS MOUNTAIN HOME EARLY
IN THE MORNING OF SEPTEMBER 3. IN AN EFFORT TO AVOID ANY
MISUNDERSTANDINGS I READ MY PRESENTATION FROM FRENCH NOTES
TRANSLATED FROM OUR TALKING POINTS. SHEIKH PIERRE IS A
MAN OF GRAT CHARACTER, BUT HIS MIND IS NOT SUBTLE OR
ATTUNED TO NUANCES OF LANGUAGE. IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE,
THEREFORE, TO ELICIT A DETAILED REACTION TO OUR TALKING
POINTS, HOWEVER MUCH WE TRIED.

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2. GEMAYEL BEGAN BY DESCRIBING OUR PRESENTATION AS

"VERY OBJECTIVE BUT VERY GENERAL." HE THEN LAUNCHED INTO A LENGTHY LECTURE, ALONG THE LINES WE DESCRIBED AFTER OUR FIRST VISIT, ON THE RELATIONSHIPS AMONG INTER-NATIONS COMMUNISM, DEMOCRACY, THE MIDDLE EAST, THE PALESTINIAN ROLE IN LEBANON AND THE PHALANGE'S TRADITIONAL FRIENDSHIP FOR THE US. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE CURRENT TALKS BETWEEN THE PHALANGISTS AND THE PALESTINIANS WERE MAKING PROGRESS BUT DOUBTED A SUCCESSFUL CONCLUSION TO SUCH DISCUSSIONS WITHOUT A CENTRAL LEBANESE FORCE OR AN EXTERNAL FORCE TO INSURE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CAIRO ACCORDS. HE ALSO LAMENTED THE LACK OF A UNITED PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY WITH WHICH TO DEAL. ON THE SUBJECT OF PRESIDENT-ELECT SARKIS, GEMAYEL COULD ONLY SAY THAT HE WAS A GOOD AND INTELLIGENT MAN BUT NOT A STRONG ONE. SARKIS HAD, THEREFORE, ALL THE MORE NEED FOR A CENTRAL FORCE IF HE WAS TO ACCOMPLISH ANYTHING.

3. WE PROBED FOR A REACTION TO THE TWO POSSIBLE DANGERS WE SAW AS RISING IN THE ABSENCE OF A SETTLEMENT. GEMAYEL DECLARED THAT THE BALANCE OF ARAB ELEMENTS WAS MORE LIKELY OVER A PERIOD OF TIME TO TILT IN LEBANON'S FAVOR. THE FIRST SIGN, HE SAID, WAS THE SITUATION IN KUWAIT. OTHER ARAB COUNTRIES ARE COMING TO REALIZE, ACCORDING TO GEMAYEL, THAT INTERNATIONAL COMMUNISM IS EXPLOITING BOTH ISLAM AND THE PALESTINIANS. IN HIS VIEW THE USG SHOULD TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS NEW AWARENESS BY DEMANDING THAT SAUDI ARABIA AND KUWAIT TAKE A MORE POSITIVE STANCE TOWARD LEBANON. WHILE CONCEDED THAT THE USG HAD BEEN PLAYING A POSITIVE ROLE, HE ARGUED THAT IT WAS FAR LESS THAN THE SITUATION AND THE LONG HISTORY OF USG/LEBANESE FRIENDSHIP REQUIRED.

4. SHEIKH PIERRE WOULD NOT RESPOND DIRECTLY TO OUR QUESTION OF THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE SYRIANS SUPPORTED MARONITE GOALS, BUT HE DID SPEAK VERY WARMLY OF PRESIDENT ASAD. ASAD, DECLARED GEMAYEL, HAD REACTIONS AS AN ARAB, NOT AS A MUSLIM. THIS REVOLUTIONARY STEP HAD SERVED TO REMIND AND MAKE LEBANESE PROUD OF THEIR ARABISM. OTHER MUSLIM ARAB LEADERS WERE READY TO TAKE THE SAME KIND OF STANCE TOWARD LEBANON, HE THOUGHT, AND THE USG SHOULD

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ENCOURAGE THEM TO DO SO.

5. COMMENT:

AS SHEIKH PIERRE SEEMINGLY IGNORED MANY ASPECTS OF OUR POSITION, WE ASSURED THAT THE PHALANGE HIGH COMMAND WAS AWARE OF ALL THE NUANCES BY MEANS OF OUR DETAILED FOLLOW-UP BRIEFINGS OF AMIN GEMAYEL AND KARIM PAKRADOUNI. (SEPTELS

FOLLOW) AS A RESULT, WE ARE SATISFIED THAT OUR MESSAGE GOT
THROUGH ACCURATELY TO THE PHALANGE.
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